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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION
Forty-second session

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION

Eleventh periodic reports of States parties due in 1993

Addendum

SWEDEN*

[23 December 1993]

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Annex Organized Racism - interim report dated September 1991 on measures against racist organizations, by the Commission appointed in May 1990 to review the Act against Ethnic Discrimination**

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* For the ninth and tenth periodic reports submitted by the Government of Sweden and the summary records of the meetings of the Committee at which those reports were considered, see:

Ninth periodic report - CERD/C/184/Add.1 (CERD/C/SR.850-851).
Tenth periodic report - CERD/C/209/Add.1 (CERD/C/SR.901-902).

** A copy of the annex is available in English translation in the files of the Secretariat for consultation by members of the Committee.

PART I. GENERAL COMMENTS

1. The tenth periodic report of the Government of Sweden was submitted on 21 December 1990 and is contained in document CERD/C/209/Add.1. The present report updates the information in that report and refers also to its consideration by the Committee at its thirty-ninth session, on 13 March 1991 (CERD/C/SR.901 and 902).

2. On the legislative side the main item of interest to the Committee is a government bill on Sami affairs, which was presented to Parliament on 1 October 1992 (CERD/C/209/Add.1, paras. 42-49) and adopted on 15 December 1992 (see below, paras. 54-66).

3. Information is also provided about the Commission set up by the Government in May 1990 to study measures to counteract ethnic discrimination. This Commission presented its first report in September 1991 (CERD/C/209/Add.1, paras. 8, 27-36 and 76-80).

4. The developments in South Africa in the last year have been closely followed by the Swedish Government and have led to a decision to abolish gradually the measures taken against South Africa in parallel with the further progress in the abolishment of apartheid and its replacement with a democratic, non-racial society based on universal suffrage.

5. In this context reference should also be made to the "core document" on Sweden (HRI/CORE/1/Add.4)

PART II. SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION IN RELATION TO ARTICLES 2 TO 7

Article 2

6. In the tenth periodic report information was provided about the Commission set up by the Government in May 1990 with the task of studying measures to counteract ethnic discrimination (CERD/C/209/Add.1, paras. 8, 27-36 and 76-80). A special expert was appointed to assist the Commission. In September 1991, the Commission presented its first report (see annex).

7. The Commission proposes that it should be possible to introduce restrictions on the freedom of association in the case of persecution of groups other than ethnic groups, for instance immigrants or refugees. The Commission further proposes that the possibilities contained in the Instrument of Government for restrictions on the freedom of association should be expanded to cover persecution on the grounds of national origin or religious creed.

8. It is proposed that a new provision on "Organized racism and support to organized racism" be included in the Penal Code. Persons participating in or supporting an organization which engages in racist persecution by instigating or inciting particularly serious types of offences should be liable to fine or imprisonment for up to two years. The same provisions should apply to any person forming an association with the intention of engaging in such persecution. In accordance with the proposal, when printed matter is used for

communications employed in the process of forming or participating in such an association, or in support of its activities, such action should be subject to penalty under the Freedom of the Press Act.

9. The measures proposed to counteract organized racism are not directed at the racist attitude of the association as such. The decisive element is whether the organization can be said to have engaged in persecution by participating in or inciting particular types of racist crimes, namely offences containing elements of violence, threats or coercion. The organizational form of the association is not relevant. The concept of persecution implies criminal activities with some degree of repetition or intensity.

10. The Commission further proposes that racist motives for, or racist components in, a crime should constitute general grounds for increasing the severity of the punishment. In the opinion of the Commission, such legislative provisions would form an appropriate complement to the existing protection covering also organizations that are of a less dangerous character but whose activities none the less inspire their supporters to engage in harassment and similar behaviour.

11. The Commission's interim report has been referred to several authorities and organizations for comments. The Government is now considering further action based on the proposals put forward by the Commission.

12. The Commission was also entrusted with the task of considering legislation to provide protection against discrimination in working life and to review the Act to Counteract Ethnic Discrimination (CERD/C/209/Add.1, paras. 23-26).

13. The Commission is of the opinion that fundamental protection against ethnic discrimination in working life should be provided by law rather than by collective agreements, and that it should be possible for every individual subjected to discrimination to have recourse directly to the law (CERD/C/209/Add.1, para. 34).

14. The purpose of the legislation should be to create protection in cases of discrimination which directly offend against a general sense of justice and in which the discriminatory element plays a prominent role. It is intended to supplement the current rules that apply to the work of the Ethnic Discrimination Ombudsman.

15. The new legislation should be incorporated into the labour law and should apply to the entire labour market. The Act should cover both job applicants and persons already employed. The prohibition of discrimination should apply to deliberate, improper procedures implying special negative treatment on ethnic grounds. The prohibition should not address indirect discrimination. In the Commission's view, this clear demarcation would achieve a stronger normative effect.

16. The chief sanction against breaches of the prohibition of discrimination is to be compensation. It is proposed that the Ethnic Discrimination

Ombudsman should have a litigating role and be given the possibility of calling on an attorney to assist him in discrimination disputes.

17. The Commission proposes minor amendments of the Act to Counteract Ethnic Discrimination. The current somewhat misleading name of the Act should be changed to Act concerning the Ethnic Discrimination Ombudsman. In addition, it proposes that the text of the Act should make it clear that the Ombudsman is to take action against racism and xenophobia. A reference to the proposed Act against Ethnic Discrimination in Working Life should be introduced, specifying that the Ethnic Discrimination Ombudsman has the above-mentioned litigating role. An amendment is proposed to make it possible for the Ethnic Discrimination Ombudsman to request information, on pain of fine if necessary, in order to give him a better opportunity to assist private individuals who require information, for example about another applicant who has been appointed.

18. During the thirty-ninth session of the Committee the question was asked whether the organs responsible for combating racial discrimination were not too many in number and whether efforts were being made to coordinate their activities. Questions were also raised about the status of the Ethnic Discrimination Ombudsman as compared to that of the other ombudsmen (CERD/C/SR.902, para. 6).

19. The two principal agencies entrusted with the task of counteracting ethnic discrimination in Sweden are the National Board of Immigration and the Ethnic Discrimination Ombudsman. The division of work between these two agencies is quite clear and their operations are subject to continuous evaluation.

20. In this field the National Board of Immigration focuses on studies and dissemination of information and is responsible for communicating its findings so as to forestall and prevent ethnic conflicts.

21. The Ethnic Discrimination Ombudsman is responsible for counteracting existing or suspected discrimination, mainly from a legal perspective. He must assist individuals who experience discrimination to protect their rights by providing expert advice and information, help to mould public opinion by participating in public debate, and recommend legislation and other measures to combat ethnic discrimination. The Ombudsman has not yet been given a litigating role; it was considered to be too early to establish a separate prosecuting agency until more experience had been gained and the appropriate legislation had been put in place.

22. The settlement of disputes between employers and employees does not lie within the competence of the Ethnic Discrimination Ombudsman. In the Swedish legal tradition, disputes between private parties should be decided by the courts and not by an administrative authority. If the Ethnic Discrimination Ombudsman were given such powers, this might also jeopardize his cooperation with ethnic groups, if an adverse decision resulted.

Paragraph 1 (a) to (d)

23. A new constitutional law, the Freedom of Expression Act, entered into force in 1992. In Sweden, freedom of expression in the media is regulated in the Freedom of the Press Act and the Freedom of Expression Act, which both have constitutional law status. The Freedom of Expression Act is a compilation of statutes covering almost all current electronic media, such as radio, television, video and motion pictures. Both Acts are based on the same principles.

24. All citizens are guaranteed the freedom to express ideas, opinions and emotions on any subject in the media. The only restrictions allowed are those provided for in the two Acts, which also specify when an utterance in the media is a punishable offence. If sanctions are to apply, the utterance in question must also be punishable under the Penal Code. Persecution of a population group is a punishable offence under both Acts and also under the Penal Code.

25. In accordance with the main principle, criminal liability for media content rests with the person registered as the responsible editor. If no editor has been appointed, the person who should have made such an appointment is responsible. Prior censorship of the press, radio and television by public authorities is prohibited, but the Freedom of Expression Act allows for legislation on censorship and the scrutiny of films and video tapes which are to be shown in public.

26. In the tenth periodic report, reference was made to a court case against Radio Islam (CERD/C/209/Add.1, paras. 32-33). Mr. Ahmed Rami, as the responsible editor for this radio programme, was convicted of persecution of a population group. The decision of the lower court was upheld by the Court of Appeal and Rami was sentenced to six months in prison. The Supreme Court has refused Mr. Rami's application for leave to appeal.

27. Participatory local radio transmissions (närradio) are open to local associations operating within the transmission area of the radio station. Decisions on applications to use such local radio stations are taken by a special board. The same rules apply to Swedes and non-Swedes.

28. Serious violations of the Freedom of Expression Act may lead to the suspension of a broadcasting permit. Such a decision can only be taken by a court assisted by a jury.

29. The National Broadcasting Corporation also transmits a large selection of radio and television programmes for immigrants in their own languages, with news and entertainment from both their new and their old home countries. The Corporation is obliged to provide the immigrants with this service according to the agreement with the Government, which also stipulates that the resources set aside for this purpose may not be reduced during the current agreement period.

30. The question was also raised as to why literature distributed by Dietlieb Felderer and a publication entitled Revisionist History had not been prohibited in Sweden (CERD/C/SR.901, para. 18). Under the Freedom of the

Press Act, action against a publication can only be taken if it has been published in Sweden. If printed abroad, the publication is considered to be published when it is put on sale or distributed to the public. Prosecution must be initiated within one year after publication, or within six months in the case of a periodical. Private action can be taken within five years if a publication contains serious calumny.

31. A general prohibition of a publication cannot be instituted, nor can action be taken against an individual who is in possession of a publication containing utterances constituting a breach of the Freedom of the Press Act. In all probability the time-limit for prosecution has expired in the case of Felderer's literature, but if new issues of Revisionist History, for instance, were published, action could be taken if they contained utterances implying persecution of a population group.

Paragraph 1 (e)

32. In the tenth periodic report information was provided about supportive measures that had been introduced to promote cooperation between Swedes and immigrants and to counter hostility between ethnic groups (CERD/C/209/Add.1, paras. 37-39). Under an ordinance of June 1990, SKr 6,5 million was allocated for the fiscal year 1992/93 to promote good ethnic relations and to reinforce immigrant organizations.

33. Immigrant organizations also receive financial support from the Government on a regular basis. These funds are distributed by the National Board of Immigration. For the current fiscal year SKr 14.3 million has been allocated for this purpose. In the current budget an extra allocation in the amount of SKr 10 million has been set aside for measures to combat racism and hostility to foreigners. An additional amount of SKr 5 million has been allocated from non-budgetary funds for information activities in the youth organizations.

34. The tenth report also included mention of a brochure entitled "Immigrant Issues at Company Level" containing guidelines prepared jointly by the Swedish Employers Confederation, the labour unions and the National Immigration Board. During the consideration of the report one member of the Committee raised the question of how well these guidelines were observed in practice (CERD/C/SR.902, para. 16).

35. It is not possible to give a definitive answer to this question. The main purpose of the brochure was to disseminate information and it was only mentioned in the tenth periodic report as an example of cooperation between a government agency and the parties in the labour market in achieving equal treatment for immigrants at their place of work.

36. Despite the efforts undertaken to counter hostility between ethnic groups, incidents none the less occur. At the thirty-ninth session some members of the Committee referred to incident involving immigrants in Eskilstuna, Lesjöfors, Överum, Jönköping, Jämtland and Småland (CERD/C/SR.901). These cases have been investigated, and the findings are given below.

37. The case in Eskilstuna, in which immigrants were involved and which was known to the local police authorities and the press, concerned the murder of a newly married Kurdish couple. The families of the murdered couple were suspected of the crime since they had disapproved of the marriage. The police authorities have not been able to solve the case.

38. At Lesjöfors a Swede was convicted of assault and battery of an Iranian. Two other Swedes were convicted of preparations for the same crime. The Iranian involved in the incident was acquitted.

39. At Överum, two cases have been reported of refugees convicted of crimes committed at the refugee camp.

40. There is also one case in which two Swedish citizens were convicted and fined for writing racist slogans on a car belonging to an immigrant. They were also obliged to pay for repainting the car.

41. At Jönköping, no cases of attacks against refugees or immigrants are known to the local authorities.

42. The case in Jämtland seems to refer to a young Swede with a predilection for explosives. He has been convicted of unlawful use of explosives in several cases. The involvement of immigrants in one of the cases seems to have been purely coincidental.

43. In Härnösand two cases have been reported involving Swedes who committed crimes against immigrants. In one case, two Swedes were fined for burning a cross of a Ku Klux Klan type. In the other case a Swede was sentenced to eight months' imprisonment for having tried to run down two refugees with his car and for having beaten up another refugee.

44. Attacks on refugees' barracks have occurred at Kimstad, Kungälv, Mariestad and Bocksjö, but it had not been possible to apprehend the perpetrators. Sjöbo does not have a refugee camp and no attacks against refugees have been reported there. The case in Småland seems to refer to an Eritrean family in Oskarshamn (CERD/SR.901, para. 32). Some clothes belonging to the children of the family were burnt outside their house, but not a cross. The perpetrators have not been found. The police do not exclude the possibility that the children themselves burnt the cloths.

45. In 1989, Swedish courts passed three sentences concerning prosecution of a population group; in 1990 there were seven such sentences and in 1991 there were eight. In 1989, one sentence for unlawful discrimination was passed and in the following two years four such sentences.

46. Sjöbo is the only municipality to have held a local referendum on accepting refugees. The vast majority of the municipalities which have taken a decision on this issue after Sjöbo have accepted refugees. There has been some evidence of popular resistance to receiving refugees in some municipalities, but for the most part this attitude has occurred in cases where quick decisions had to be taken due to the impending arrival of refugees, so that the local population could not be informed properly in advance.

47. Refugee camps now exist in most municipalities. Only in a few cases have the authorities abstained from locating refugees in a municipality owing to the negative attitude of the population. Sjöbo is such a case. In most of the municipalities where a negative reaction against receiving refugees was initially experienced, the attitude became positive after some time had elapsed. In some municipalities, the local population has protested when a refugee camp has been closed down.

48. Some research has been carried out regarding the attitudes reflected in the local referendum in Sjöbo. The result indicates that a general dissatisfaction with government interference in local affairs was a more important factor in the poll than hostility to foreigners.

49. The following comments may be made in reply to questions raised by members of the Committee as to whether incidents involving the removal of children from their mothers occurred more frequently among ethnic minority children than Swedish children.

50. It is assumed that the inquiry refers primarily to cases where a small child is removed from its home against the will of the parents due to the unsatisfactory conditions in the home. The placement of a child in care outside its own home may also occur on a voluntary basis. There are also cases where older children are removed from their homes because of their own behaviour, such as criminality or drug abuse.

51. The available statistics and other studies do not indicate that non-Swedish children are more likely to be removed from their homes on a non-voluntary basis than Swedish children. However, families of foreign origin seem to be overrepresented among the voluntary cases. There is also a higher proportion of children of foreign origin than Swedes amongst older children taken into custody because of their own behaviour. However, when reading the statistics it should be borne in mind that it is not possible to ascertain how many of these "foreigners" come from other Nordic countries. It may be assumed that families of Finnish origin are involved in a fairly large number of cases. Furthermore, the statistics do not show in how many "Swedish" cases naturalized Swedes of foreign origin are involved.

52. There seems to be no clear evidence to indicate that ethnic discrimination may be the reason for the slight difference in the figures for Swedes and non-Swedes in cases where the authorities have intervened in child-care cases.

Paragraph 2

The Sami

53. In the tenth periodic report, an account was given to the work of a government committee assigned to investigate the possibilities of improving the position of the Sami ethnic minority in the areas where they live (CERD/C/209/Add.1, paras. 42-49).

54. On 1 October 1992, the Government submitted a bill to Parliament incorporating several of the Committee's proposals.

55. Of the main features of the bill is a proposal to set up a governmental authority with the primary task of nurturing a living Sami culture in Sweden. The governing body of this authority is an assembly with 31 members (the Sameting), all elected every fourth year from among the Sami population. The first elections are to be held in May 1993. The Government appoints the chairman of the assembly. Day-to-day administration is carried out by a board set up by the assembly, which may also set up other bodies to carry out its duties.

56. In addition to its main task of fostering Sami culture, the Sameting has been assigned other specific functions, inter alia to decide on the distribution of funds allocated by the Government to promote Sami culture and to support Sami organizations. The Sameting will also allocate other funds placed at the disposal of the Sami community for joint utilization and will appoint the board of the Sami schools. The Sameting will also direct efforts to promote the Sami language and will participate in public planning to ensure that Sami needs are taken into consideration in the utilization of land and water resources, for reindeer-breeding, for example. The Sameting will also be responsible for information about Sami affairs.

57. The Sami schools are financed directly by the State, and SKr 25 million were allocated for this purpose in the fiscal year 1992/93. Today Sami children are able to choose between attending one of the six Sami schools or the ordinary municipal nine-year compulsory school, where they can also receive instruction in Sami. In 1991/92, 137 children attended the Sami schools and 130 participated in the integrated Sami education in the municipal schools.

58. Since 1950 there has been a special residential folk high school at Jokkmokk offering adult education to Sami and non-Sami students. As for higher education, there has been a professional chair in the Sami language at the University of Umeå since 1974. There are similar chairs at the Universities of Helsinki and Oulu in Finland and at the Universities of Oslo and Tromsö in Norway. Since 1989 there has been a Sami college at Euovdageaidnu in Norway which also accepts students from Sweden and Finland.

59. The government bill also deals with the question of giving the Sami language the status of an official language. The Government considers that making Sami an official language would require expenditures which could be used better in other ways to promote the Sami language. It is pointed out that conditions are different from those in Finland and Norway, where legislation establishing Sami as an official language has already been introduced. The concentration of the Sami population is much more pronounced in Finland and Norway. There are no municipalities in Sweden where the Sami-speaking population exceeds 10 per cent, while in Finland and Norway the Sami are in the majority in some municipalities. The total Sami population does not exceed 20,000 persons. The Government proposes a substantial increase in the funds allocated to promote the Sami language in the budget to be submitted in the coming year.

60. In line with the Committee's proposal, the legal position of reindeer-herding will be strengthened as the result of legislation. The most important alterations and clarifications contained in the new bill are the following.

61. It is made clear in the bill that the right of reindeer-herding is based on immemorial usage and is thus not a right conferred upon the Sami by the State. The bill states that this right is of a collective nature and is held by all Sami, without, however, specifying who is a Sami. (The previous definition of a Sami implied a limitation: "a person is of Sami descent if reindeer-herding has been the permanent occupation of his father or mother or any of his grandparents"). However, the right to engage in reindeer-herding is, as formerly, held only by members of a Sami village. The reason for this limitation is that the reindeer-breeding areas can support only a limited number of reindeer and a limited number of people who depend on this use of the land. Since ancient times the Sami engaged in reindeer-herding have been organized in Sami villages with far-reaching autonomy of decision-making in matters concerning the Sami villages and their reindeer-herding activities. The Government has found it inappropriate to interfere with this ancient tradition.

62. Reindeer pasturage rights may give rise to conflicts between the Sami and the owners and users of grazing land. The bill therefore makes it clear that interference with year-round pasturage by using the land for other purposes is prohibited, if such interference involves considerable inconvenience for reindeer-herding.

63. Like other property rights in Sweden the reindeer-herding rights of the Sami are subject to expropriation and the Government is thus empowered to cancel reindeer-herding rights when the land where reindeer-herding is practised is required for purposes referred to in the Expropriation Act. Previously, the possibility of cancelling reindeer-herding rights was more extensive.

64. The legislation also safeguards the right of all Sami people to collect wood for handicraft and other purposes on land belonging to the State (Crown lands), by agreement with the agency responsible for the land.

65. The bill was approved by Parliament on 15 December 1992 (Act SFS 1992: 1433).

Article 3

Measures regarding South Africa

66. Sweden holds the view that the policy of apartheid implies both a violation of fundamental human rights as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and a grave threat to international peace and security. Sweden's policy against apartheid is thus based on two crucial elements in its foreign policy: on the one hand, an endeavour to promote respect for human rights and, on the other, a conviction that conflicts should be settled by peaceful means.

67. The aim of Sweden's policy towards South Africa is to contribute to the abolition of apartheid and to its replacement by a democratic non-racial society with universal suffrage for all South Africans. Although marred by violence and the delay in reaching an agreement on interim arrangements and a new constitution, developments in South Africa have also contained positive elements over the past two years. In view of these developments, the Swedish Government appointed a delegation of parliamentarians with the assignment to visit South Africa in order to hold the most extensive talks possible and to propose adjustments in Sweden's policies towards South Africa on the basis of its findings.

68. In its report, submitted in March 1992, the delegation suggested that the ban on trade should be lifted when an agreement had been reached on an interim government. At the same time, most of the other restrictions should be lifted as well. The ban on investment should be revoked when the interim government had taken office. Sanctions decided by the United Nations, such as the arms embargo, would remain in force until the Security Council decided that they could be lifted.

69. In its proposal to Parliament, the Government followed the recommendations proposed by the delegation. These were also adopted by Parliament in June 1992.

70. Furthermore, Swedish visa rules were relaxed as of 1 July 1991. Visas are now granted to South African citizens except in cases pertaining to economic sanctions or to the United Nations arms embargo.

71. During the latter half of 1992, the Swedish Government granted certain exemptions from the trade ban to Swedish companies, while at the same time noting the developments in South Africa did not yet warrant the lifting of the ban as such.

72. An important element of Sweden's policy on South Africa is the development and humanitarian assistance given to southern Africa. During the current fiscal year, about 40 per cent of Sweden's total bilateral development assistance is appropriated for southern Africa. The main part of the assistance goes to the front-line States and to the Southern African Development Cooperation Conference (SADCC), but assistance is also given to the African National Congress (ANC) and other organizations active in the work against apartheid within South Africa.

Article 5

73. At the thirty-ninth session of the Committee, questions were asked about the situation of immigrants with regard to employment, unemployment, wages and skills.

74. In 1989, 237,000 foreign citizen in the age-range 16-64 were employed in Sweden: 126,000 were men and 110,800 women. The employment ratio was approximately 10 per cent lower among foreigners than among Swedes.

75. In 1991, the unemployment rate of the total population in the age-range 16-64 was 2.7 per cent. The corresponding figure for foreign

citizens was 6.6 per cent. The unemployment rate of citizens from the Nordic countries was lower at 4.4 per cent. The corresponding figure for foreigners from countries outside the Nordic area was 8.5 per cent.

Type of employment

76. A study carried out in 1985 shows that immigrants are employed in manufacturing to a much greater extent than the indigenous population, especially in the manufacture of means of transport. Employment in the restaurant, hotel, cleaning and garbage collection sectors was also more common among immigrants than among Swedes. Almost every fourth person employed in these sectors was born abroad. More than every seventh person in the service sector was an immigrant.

77. Males born abroad were employed mainly as mechanics, repairmen and fitters in the manufacturing industry. Females born abroad found employment mainly as cleaners, nurses or hospital assistants. The statistics show that immigrants were overrepresented in unskilled jobs but were less likely to be found among employees, civil servants or private entrepreneurs. In this connection it is interesting to note that the employment pattern of second-generation immigrants is much more like that of indigenous Swedes. An investigation carried out in the years 1984-1988 indicated that three out of four second-generation immigrants (persons born in Sweden with at least one parent who was or had been a foreign citizen) worked in the service sector, which is the same proportion as for indigenous Swedes. A quarter of the second-generation immigrants worked in the manufacturing sector.

Wages

78. Statistics from 1987 show that Swedes earned more than immigrants. They indicate that 82 per cent of men and slightly less than 80 per cent of women with foreign citizenship had an earned income. The corresponding percentages for Swedish citizens were 94 and 90. The average income of Swedish males was SKr 126,000, compared to SKr 102,000 for foreign males. For women the differences were slightly less: SKr 84,800 for Swedish women and SKr 75,600 for foreign women. The differences may be explained by the fact that foreign workers are more likely to have low-paid jobs than Swedes and that the average immigrant is younger and is more likely to be unemployed. The differences are less in the higher age-ranges, which may be due to the fact that older foreign citizens have lived longer in Sweden.

79. A general finding is that there is a strong connection between income level and the duration of residence in Sweden. The income levels are approximately the same as for Swedes among immigrants who came to Sweden 20 years ago or earlier.

Education

80. The educational background of immigrants is far from homogeneous. Owing to the varying political and economic reasons they had for coming to Sweden, immigrants are not always representative of the average educational level of their country of origin.

81. Approximately 9 per cent of the total adult population in Sweden (16-74 years) has a substantial post-secondary school education (at least three years, research training included). The same percentage applies for the indigenous Swedish population. Among immigrants the level is somewhat higher. There are no statistics on the number of immigrants with an academic degree. According to estimates, approximately 15 to 20 per cent of the immigrants who have come to Sweden in the last few years have university training, which would imply that between 20,000 and 30,000 graduates were added to the Swedish workforce during the 1980s.

82. As stated in the tenth report (CERD/C/209/Add.1, paras. 105-111), great efforts are made to provide Swedish language education for immigrants. The School Act now includes provisions on basic training in the Swedish language. Chapter 13 of the Act replaces the former 1986 Act on Basic Education in Swedish for Immigrants. As previously, responsibility for providing this training rests with the municipalities and it is free of charge for the participants. This type of education is aimed at persons over 16 years of age.

83. For younger persons the necessary Swedish language training is provided within the ordinary school system. Special efforts are also made to cover other languages. Children whose mother tongue is not Swedish are also entitled to tuition in their mother tongue in compulsory and upper secondary schools. This education is voluntary for the children and is financed from the general allocation given by the Government to the municipalities for operating the comprehensive schools. The decision on the allocation of the general government grant for the various educational needs of the comprehensive school rests with the municipality. There has been no change in the obligation of municipalities to provide immigrant children with tuition in their mother tongue. The volume of education must be in accordance with the needs of the residents of the municipality.

Special efforts to integrate refugees and immigrants into the labour market

84. Priority is given to refugees and immigrants in Swedish labour market policy. The primary aim is to enable newcomers to gain a foothold in the Swedish labour market and to avoid long-term unemployment. This requires additional time, special knowledge and special measures; as a result, additional resources have been allocated. Good results have been achieved in recent years, but the present slump in the Swedish economy has undoubtedly hit immigrants especially hard.

85. An amount of SKr 294 million was allocated for fiscal year 1992/93, for special labour market measures to assist unemployed refugees and immigrants to find employment. The sum of SKr 212 million was allocated for 1991/1992 for the same purpose.

86. In 1991, the number of residence permits issued to new immigrants amounted to 39,893. Out of this total 18,663 were for people seeking asylum; 21,230 were relatives of immigrants already settled in Sweden.